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***Fairfax County Program of Studies: "Closest to the People"***

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**Dear Parents/Guardians:**

While many students feel that the federal government has the greatest impact on them, in truth, the decisions, actions, and programs of the local government play a much greater part of its citizens' daily lives. In hopes of furthering student's understanding of issues facing their community, each student is encouraged to become an active, responsible member of their local community as well as their country. This goal is promoted in the Grade 8 Civics/Economics/Geography program of studies in Fairfax County through classroom experiences as well as through the requirement that each student complete a community service learning project. A minimum of \_\_ hours of service to the school and community is required of each 8<sup>th</sup> grader. This component goes beyond the traditional curriculum question of what a student should know to what they should be able to do.

Attached is a list of possible ideas for the project. Another excellent resource to assist your child in selecting their volunteer activity is the Directory of Youth Service Learning Opportunities published by the Fairfax County Volunteer Center. It is requested that you discuss your child's choices with him or her and make appropriate suggestions for how he or she can best complete this assignment.

In order to get the most out of this service learning project, your child needs to complete four steps. First, he/she should decide what type of work they would like to do. Your child should contract with an adult or organization to whom he/she will provide his/her service. A date and time to perform the service should be arranged. The next step is to do the service. At the time the service is performed, the student should ask the adult to sign a form to verify each hour of service was satisfactorily completed. Students are encouraged to provide their service on a regular basis, for example, one half hour of service each week. Lastly, the student will be asked to reflect on what was done and how that might contribute to the community.

Please sign below to indicate that you are aware of, and understand, the requirements for the successful implementation of this project. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, I would like to hear from you. I hope that this project will be beneficial to everyone involved. Volunteerism can, and should, be a rewarding experience.

Sincerely,

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Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Civics Period #: \_\_\_\_\_

**I am aware of, and understand, the requirements of the Service Learning Project:**

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Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

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Student Signature

Date